1:Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1952
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net. His mother and aunt, taking their burden baskets, went to fetch manioc roots, which they had put to soak; the uncle was bathing near by. Aside from the youth, there remained in the house only a little boy some seven years old. Suddenly the youth fell from the platform, which was about 2½ m. above the ground, and for some time remained immobile on the floor. Then he said: "Why didst thou quarrel with me? Now I shall leave!" He arose and took to the jungle. The little boy followed him in bewilderment; but the youth, noticing him, left the trail and hid himself. A little later he returned to the house, staggering, fell upon a box, and there died of the poison he had taken.

There is one very serious motive for feuds and murder among the Tukuna: the suspicion that certain persons are using their magical powers to the detriment of others. Without exaggeration, this suspicion affects 10 per cent of the total population, with varying intensity; it is confirmed and accepted by some, denied by others. In the section on "Magic and Religion" I shall discuss this subject in more detail.

Drunkenness.—Drunkenness is the Tukuna's national vice and their only one. At their feasts, men, women, and children drink, and perhaps half the men and a tenth of the women and children become intoxicated. Many continue to dance even when drunk, beating a drum and singing without annoying anyone; but some become troublesome and offensive. Others, exclusively men, drink until they collapse into a hammock or in some corner, or even in the yard, where they vomit and sleep it off; still others grow quarrelsome, provoking more or less serious brawls that result in injuries or even deaths.

The small extent to which alcohol arouses the sexual instinct in Indians is notable; the youths drink, dance, and beat drums with their companions throughout the nights and days, apparently having no eyes for the girls, who in groups of two to five are doing the same thing. I have never seen Tukuna youths, whether drunk or sober, fighting over girls.

However, at these parties, in some corner of the house or yard there is invariably a group of men, already more or less senile, who humor themselves with obscene jokes, accompanied by hoots of laughter and illustrative gestures, though they never annoy the opposite sex with their nastiness.

Industry.—One cannot tax the Tukuna with being "most indolent," as did Ribeiro de Sampaio; and the yarn about the Indian who lives with his family for a whole week on a bunch of bananas, passing the entire time sleeping or swinging in his hammock, appears quite different to a firsthand observer.

Except for those who are on the road to ruin because of their dependence upon civilized establishments, above all on rum stills, the Tukuna maintain a stable economy in their own lives. Many of them through their own efforts succeed in obtaining such material improvements as good firearms, iron tools, and sufficient clothing—even sewing machines.

Unmarried youths work least—when they do not hire themselves out to the Neobrazilians—but girls and married couples are hardly ever idle except after sundown. Usually, whenever I sought out a Tukuna, it happened that nobody was at home, or at most, only the children were. It was necessary to wait until afternoon when the owners returned to the house from their work. The reason that

2: Nimuendajú E-5 (1941-1942) 1948
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apart, which is correlated with their lack of social organization other than blood ties. When drunk they quarrel and often cause injuries and death. In their dealings with the Neo-Brazilians, both parties exhibit their worst qualities. Nevertheless, the *Tucuna* are not unsociable and frequently visit one another and hold festive meetings, when they work collectively for their host. They retain tenaciously their original spiritual culture, although hard work has brought important material improvements. They now have good firearms, tools, clothes, and sewing machines, and they live in financial independence. Some, however, enticed to industrial establishments (rum factories) of the civilized people, become proletarian and then degenerate.

Moieties and clans.—The *Tucuna* are divided into two exogamous, unnamed patrilineal moieties, associated respectively with the east and west. One has 15 unlocalized, patrilineal sibs with tree names; the other has 21 sibs with bird names. Neither the clans nor moieties have outward distinguishing features, except for the private use of certain musical instruments on ceremonial occasions. There is no clear relationship between clan members and their eponym, except that a person's name refers obscurely to certain qualities of the animal or plant, thus revealing his clan. A person is named by his maternal relatives the day after his birth.

The *Tucuna* maintain moiety exogamy with strict inflexibility, and in 1941 still punished violations with death. They regard incest as a sin against the goddess Taé, who punishes it by making one insane during his life and by annihilating his soul after his death.

LIFE CYCLE

Birth and childhood.—After coitus, conception depends on Taé, who gives a soul to children. Abortion and infanticide are practiced, especially when the father is a Neo-Brazilian, as the child would be disqualified for sib and moiety membership. Otherwise, it is believed that infanticide is a sin and that Taé punishes the soul of the perpetrator after death.

Childbirth takes place in a temporary shelter prepared in the bush near the house. The newborn child is immediately painted with genipa. Both parents are confined and diet until the umbilical cord drops off. Children are carried in a woven cotton sling passing over a shoulder. Slings are double in part, so that a child sits in one portion while the other supports its back.

When a child begins to crawl, there is a feast in which it is painted with urucú and covered with bits of parrot feathers while the paint is still sticky. At another feast, formerly celebrated when the child was 2 but now when it is 4, its hair is pulled out and its ears pierced. Contrary to certain authors, this operation does not endanger a child's life. About 8 months later there is a supplementary feast when the hair, having grown again, is trimmed, and the relics of the previous feast are burned.

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is unnecessary; a boy and girl may meet at a feast and leave married at the end. The wife's parents never renounce their authority over her and do not permit the husband to take her far away, which results in a certain matrilocal tendency.

Polygyny even today is considered licit, but cases of bigamy are rare. In the only case known, a famous man who was both priest and chief had three sisters as wives simultaneously. Other cases of sororate have occurred. The levirate, also formerly frequent, was considered desirable.

Jealousy may cause violent quarrels between husband and wife, but never murder and rarely divorce. Adultery, though causing scenes, is insufficient reason for divorce. Guilt is always placed on the woman. The father's authority in the family is great.

In case of robbery, the offended party requires restitution and sometimes is extremely severe with the thief.

Injuries and death occur almost exclusively when people are drunk during a feast, for alcohol stimulates certain *Tucuna* to fight. Drunkenness absolves the murderer from responsibility, but the victim's relatives always feel resentful and hostile toward him.

A house is the property of its builder, i.e., the head of the family. The clearing belongs to the woman by whom it was made.

The *Tucuna* no longer have chiefs as they are too individualistic to accept authority and as the civilized people have discredited the office by designating chiefs through whom they could exploit and oppress the Indians. Formerly, chiefs of local groups were heads of large families whose magic powers, intelligence, and ability in dealing with foreigners gave them prestige. There was never, however, a chief for the entire nation.

Death.—Until the end of the past century, the deceased and all his ornaments were placed in a large chicha jar which was covered with a vessel, buried in a cemetery, and the site sometimes marked with a rod of muirapiranga. Well-liked people sometimes were buried in the house. They put a little food, beverage, and a fire on the grave, periodically renewing it. Tessmann (1930, p. 564) incorrectly attributed secondary burial to the *Tucuna*.

WARFARE

The *Tucuna* are not warlike. They defended themselves against the *Omagua*, their principal enemies, and drove them to the banks of the Solimões River only when the latter had invaded their lands. They fought with arrows, poisoned spears, and round tapir-hide shields, and protected their paths with poisoned caltrops. They did not take prisoners or keep trophies from slain enemy. They never fought civilized people, except to avenge personal insults.

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ESTHETIC AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

532 **Art.**—The *Tucuna* were fine sculptors. Their carved figures on the dancing sticks, stools, and tucumã nut figures in their necklaces are at times very artistic. Painting is restricted mainly to masks and pottery ornamentation.

533 534 **Music.**—During feasts, the *Tucuna* sing in a falsetto voice so low that it can hardly be heard. Three important instruments are: (1) a wooden, tubular megaphone into which they speak and sing and which is 22 feet (6¼ m.) long with an opening 5 inches (12 cm.) wide and a mouthpiece 2 inches (5 cm.) long; (2) a conical trumpet 13 feet to 19½ feet (4 to 6 m.) long made of a strip of bark wound spirally; and (3) a piston whistle made of liana bark. The last is always sounded before the other two. In any ceremony there is always a faithful imitation of the European drum and a *Thevetia*-shell rattle, the latter taking the place of the conventional maracá, which is unknown. The old form of drum was possibly the shell of a chelonium, which now is used only in one ceremonial. There are also panpipes, bone flutes, and bamboo horns.

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526 **Adult games.**—In shuttlecock, a maize-husk ball is batted into the air with the palm of the hand by men standing in a ring. In a tug-of-war in which a thick liana is used, one team of men competes against another. A ring-and-pin game is played by two men facing each other. Grown girls make cats cradles with threads wrapped around the fingers, toes, and head.

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273 **Beverages.**—Women make alcoholic beverages from maize, cooked bitter manioc, and half-burned cakes (beijú) of manioc; the last was adopted from the Neo-Brazilians. Today many men are addicted to rum.

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SHAMANISM

754 756 Even today many Indians possess magic powers to help or harm others. These powers come from intercourse with the spirits of certain trees with which an old shaman puts his disciple in contact. The neophyte shaman receives a magic substance which contains invisible thorns. He throws these into his victim's body, where they reproduce and cause his death unless another shaman sucks them out and completes the cure by applying herbs. The shaman chews tobacco (formerly, he used a tubular wooden pipe with an opening on the side for the mouth) to become possessed of the spirit which supplied the magic pathogenic substance to the witch doctor. Chewing tobacco identifies the evil shaman.

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753 Children fall ill when the spirits of the trees kidnap their souls. Epidemics come from the sun and are spread by the wind.

683 672 When the *Tucuna* are convinced that a shaman is responsible for one or more deaths, their revenge even reaches his relatives. In 1942, three *Tucuna* killed a much-feared shaman and his two sons. The avengers